

Michigan  
Department  
of Human  
Services

Prepared by the  
DHS Office of  
Communications  
(517) 373-7394

\*Story on/re DHS at this spot

# Articles in Today's Clips

**Friday, June 22, 2007**

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

---

TOPIC	PAGE
Abuse-neglect	2-21
Medicaid	22
Day Care	23-24
Domestic Violence	25
State Employees	26-27
Seniors & Long-term Care	28-31
Volunteers	32-35

**Organization:** Michigan Department of Human Services**Date:** 6/22/2007

(powered by NewspaperClips.com)

## Newborn's mother may use depression defense

06/22/2007 © Detroit News

---

WESTLAND -- The attorney for a woman accused of stashing her newborn son in a plastic garbage bag said Thursday more than 100 pages of medical documents could support a postpartum depression defense.

After one delay for a psychiatric evaluation and another to subpoena health records, Valeeka Noelle Gartrell of Westland waived her preliminary examination Thursday in Westland's 18th District Court. Her attorney, Barry Resnick, said he needs time to review medical records for Gartrell and the child, which he obtained late Wednesday.

Postpartum depression "is the potential defense in this case," said Resnick of Farmington Hills. "We have submitted those records to our psychologist. once we review we'll be in a better position to see what avenue we'll pursue. I want to evaluate and analyze all the documents before we go any further."

Resnick said his client was unwilling to comment on the case.

Wayne County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Michael Woodyard said he could not comment on Gartrell's postpartum defense, but said "we are absolutely confident we will prove the charges to a jury."

Gartrell faces the possibility of life in prison for attempted murder and first-degree child abuse charges. Prosecutors claim she gave birth at home April 23 and placed her son in a garbage bag in her garage.

Her mother and stepfather, unaware of the birth, took Gartrell to St. Mary Mercy Hospital in Livonia for what they thought were pre-birth complications, police said.

The boy was believed to have been sealed inside the bag for up to four hours.

The child survived and is being cared for by Gartrell's mother along with the woman's 3-year-old, Resnick said.

An arraignment is set for July 5 in Wayne County Circuit Court.

*Imported: Jun 22 2007 6:46AM Indexed: Jun 22 2007 7:17AM*

Organization: Michigan Department of Human Services

Date: 6/22/2007

(powered by NewspaperClips.com)

## Local priest goes to bat for child abuse prevention

06/22/2007 © Grand Haven Tribune

Local priest goes to bat for child abuse prevention Thu, Jun 21, 2007

BY CHRIS EPPLETT

ceppllett@grandhaventribune.com

COMSTOCK PARK — In his 20 years of playing softball since the inception of the "Let's Go to Bat for Kids" annual charity game, the Rev. Anthony Vainavicz has never heard his last name pronounced correctly.

[Click to enlarge](#)

The retired pastor of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Spring Lake didn't hold his breath when Eric Zane of Grand Rapids radio station WGRD-FM began announcing Vainavicz's name at Wednesday's game at Fifth Third Ballpark. However, Zane didn't flinch at the complicated Lithuanian last name.

"I asked him the pronunciation ahead of time," Zane said, adding that the pronunciation sheet wasn't even correct. "He fixed it and corrected it."

Vainavicz said this may have been his last year pitching and hitting for the Catholic Social Services Padres. He was one of only two priests to participate in every one of the annual benefits for child abuse prevention hosted by Catholic Social Services in Grand Rapids.

"It's a fun game, and I've said many times the only reason I play is for the kids," Vainavicz said prior to the game. "I'm going to make a fool of myself for the kids."

However, Vainavicz did everything short of making a fool of himself as the diocesan priests and deacons faced local media. The 71-year-old retired priest, who now lives in Sparta after 15 years as pastor at St. Mary's, didn't allow a single run in the first two innings.

"I had the weaker part of the batting order," he said.

Vainavicz batted just once in the game — a pop-fly single just over the head of the second baseman that drove in a run.

The Padres pulled ahead in the fifth inning, taking a 9-5 lead. The Media Giants countered with four runs at the top of the sixth to tie the game, as Vainavicz faced the tougher part of the batting order.

However, the Padres managed to squeeze in another run before the end of the game to win 10-9.

"I can't believe how good I felt at the end," Vainavicz said. "The big winners were the kids and that's what it's all about."

Meanwhile, Zane had to admit Vainavicz's play was quite impressive.

"He didn't get hurt and that's what really matters," Zane said. "Plus, he had the bishop giving him special blessings. I saw that myself."

Proceeds from the night's game benefit Catholic Social Services programs, including early intervention, crisis intervention and case management programs for children and families affected by abuse and neglect.

The programs served nearly 12,000 individuals and families in 2006.

*Imported: Jun 22 2007 4:41AM Indexed: Jun 22 2007 7:17AM*

## Charges dismissed in infant's death

6/22/07 Rochester Eccentric

---

The charges against a nanny suspected in the death of a Rochester infant were dropped last week and it's uncertain whether she will face charges again.

At the request of prosecutors, 52-3 District Court Judge Nancy Carniak on Thursday dismissed homicide, manslaughter and child-abuse charges filed in March against Kelly Marie Waller of Madison Heights. Waller, 30, was one of two nannies working for the parents of Ajay Bose, who was 9 weeks old when he died July 31, 2006.

Rochester police were called to the family home July 14 when the baby was found unresponsive. Doctors at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak said he had bleeding on the brain consistent with shaken baby syndrome.

A preliminary exam on the charges had been postponed earlier this month and was scheduled to begin June 26.

Chief Deputy Oakland County Prosecutor Deborah Carley said the investigation is continuing. She said the case has been complicated because the baby had been premature and because in the two weeks between the injury and his death, the injury had begun to heal.

"It's been a very difficult case," she said.

"It's very frustrating. ... But we have to make sure the case is the best case we can put forward. And we have to have all the experts ready before we have the exam. That's very important. ...

"The time limits now are so tight to get a case through the system that we just didn't want to rush it."

Last August, Rochester police issued a statement saying the cause of death was cranial cerebral trauma.

Police and the prosecutor's office have been working for months to get the medical evidence and expert witnesses together.

"We've assigned two prosecutors. One is a child abuse expert, one has extensive medical background," Carley said. "We have some very good experts we are going to talk to from Beaumont Hospital and the University of Michigan."

Waller's attorney, James Thomas, did not return a phone call seeking comment Tuesday.

Carley said it's difficult to say whether the prosecutor will charge Waller again at a later date.

"It's going to take some time," she said.

akingsbury@hometownlife.com (248) 651-7575, Ext. 17

**Organization:** Michigan Department of Human Services**Date:** 6/22/2007

(powered by NewspaperClips.com)

## Girl begged mother not to kill her

06/22/2007 © Macomb Daily

---

"Mama, don't do it mama."

Those were likely the last words by Ashley Kukla, 5, whose mother, Jennifer Anne Kukla, fatally slit her neck and the neck of her half-sister, Alexandria Kukla, 7, last Feb. 4 in their Macomb Township trailer.

Kukla, 30, was bound over for trial in circuit court by Judge Douglas Shepherd of 41A District Court in Shelby Township on two counts of first-degree, premeditated murder following a preliminary exam.

Kukla told Detective Mark Grammatico of the Macomb County Sheriff's Office that Ashley made the comment right before stabbing her, Grammatico testified at the hearing.

Kukla told police that "evil voices" told her to kill her children to protect them from an unknown danger, according to Grammatico. After she was arrested she said she would suffer in the "deepest pits of hell" for her actions, another police officer said.

It was also revealed Thursday that two psychological exams of Kukla indicated she was legally insane when she committed the acts, leading to her attorney planning to plead "not guilty by reason of insanity" at her July 2 arraignment in Macomb County Circuit Court, according to defense attorney Steven Freers.

However, assistant Macomb prosecutor William Cataldo indicated he will seek a third mental exam of Kukla as part of an effort to challenge the insanity claim.

Grammatico, who along with Detective Dave Kennedy interviewed Kukla at the sheriff's office in Mount Clemens the Monday morning following the incident, said she told him that the voices first instructed her to kill the girls the previous night, Saturday, Feb. 3, but she resisted.

"She said she was hearing a variety of voices in her head for the first time in her life," Grammatico said under questioning by Cataldo. "She said the voices started nice and then got evil."

Kukla didn't elaborate on the content of statements by the voices, he said. "She described them as evil," Grammatico said. "She just categorized it as evil."

She followed an instruction from the "voices" to leave the home to protect the children. She dressed the girls in warm clothing and she walked with them down the street -- Chevalier Drive in Hometown Macomb park -- but returned after going only two blocks, she told police.

### Mother almost killed herself

That night she also put a butcher knife to her own throat "but thought the better of it," she told police, Grammatico said in summarizing the 1-hour interview with Kukla.

She slept between the two girls on a mattress in the bedroom that night, and awoke about 7:30 a.m., she told police. Even though it was Sunday, she dressed them for school.

The voice told her to "go kill my kids before somebody kills them. ... Just kill them so it doesn't happen," she said, according to Grammatico.

"She said she freaked out again" and stabbed Ashley in the neck with the butcher knife in the bedroom, Grammatico said. Alexandria pushed Ashley out the door, and Ashley ran through the living room to hide under the kitchen table, reports show. Kukla stabbed Alexandria then went to Ashley, the detective said.

"She said she grabbed Ashley by the arm and couldn't recall whether she stabbed her there or in the bedroom," he said.

Kukla then killed two or three dogs, two of them caged, and a mouse.

Sgt. Lori Misch, who was one of the first two officers on the scene, said the dogs were "cut from the neck to the belly." Kukla indicated to Grammatico that she killed the mouse by snapping its neck.

Police received the 911 call from Kukla's sister, Lauren Russell, who had gone to the home to check on the family. Kukla told her sister she had killed the girls. Her sister didn't go inside.

Kukla cooperated with commands by Misch and Deputy Aaron Hurley to put up her hands and come out of the house.

"I asked her what was going on," Misch said. "She said she had just killed her kids.

"I asked her how did you kill them. She said with a knife."

Kukla made other remarks.

"I believe she said she was going to the deepest pits of hell," Misch said. "She said there's a special place in hell for people like her."

She later told Grammatico she killed the dogs so they wouldn't "haunt" and "torture her in hell."

Hurley said Kukla was crying while he handcuffed her and placed her in the patrol car.

Scene was blood-covered

The scene in the bedroom was described by Hurley as "carnage" with "lots of blood."

"There was a lot of blood," said Grammatico, who arrived later. "There appeared to be blood all over the room, including the ceiling. It was dry at this point."

Smearred blood was found on the kitchen floor.

The bloodied butcher knife was found on a xylophone in the bedroom. Two steak knives with blood on their blades were found on the kitchen table. Grammatico didn't know whether the blood was human or animal.

Kukla was arrested about 6:30 p.m., meaning she was in the trailer with the bodies about 11 hours. She told police during that time she slept and smoked cigarette butts that she had to go out and retrieve from her car. Neighbors told police the trailer's front door was open most of the day, Grammatico said.

Testimony revealed that in the days before the incident, Kukla had been under stress as state Department of Human Services social workers indicated they might remove the children from the home. The girls had been removed from the home for two months a few years before due to living conditions. On top of that, the single mother had had financial problems.

Kukla's half-sister and two of her sister's friends went to the home in the days before to clean it.

Due to an extreme cold spell that weekend, the trailer's pipes had frozen so no running water was available.

Kukla told police that the morning of the slayings she considered calling her father to take the children, Grammatico said.

2nd-degree murder argued

Before Judge Shepherd ordered the case to circuit court, defense attorney Freers argued for a second-degree murder charge, saying there was no evidence of premeditation.

"There was no time for a second look as required by first-degree murder," he told the judge. "There was no preparation, no weapon bought, no attempt to cover up the crime, no cleanup of the crime."

But Cataldo, chief of the homicide unit, said Kukla's "contemplation" of the slayings the night before gave her "an opportunity to think about both issues -- to do it or not to do it."

"On Sunday, faced with the same issues ... she does it," he said.

During most of the hearing, Kukla, dressed in jail garb, kept her head down with her face hidden by her long hair.

Family members, including parents and sisters, sobbed at points during the testimony.

An initial mental evaluation of Kukla by the Center for Forensic Psychiatry indicated that Kukla understands the charges against her and can assist in her defense. But the center and Dr. Lyle Danuloff in two separate evaluations determined she was not criminally responsible for her actions at the time of the killings so was legally insane.

Cataldo said the prosecutors office will challenge the reports with the third exam.

"We're making a choice to challenge it based on the facts of the case," he said.

At a trial, Kukla could be found guilty, guilty but mentally ill or not guilty due to insanity.

If she is found insane, she will be housed at a psychological facility for an undetermined number of years. If guilty but mentally ill, she will be sentenced to a prison term and will receive special psychological and psychiatric care in prison.

*Imported: Jun 22 2007 6:46AM Indexed: Jun 22 2007 7:17AM*



**Organization:** Michigan Department of Human Services**Date:** 6/22/2007

(powered by NewspaperClips.com)

## Man Charged With Child Molestation

06/22/2007 © Lansing WILX (NBC) CH 10

---

"Any crime against a child is a terrible thing," said Jackson County Prosecutor Henry Zavislak."

Zavislak and his office have charged 42 year old Timothy Hines of Blackman Township with sexually abusing a child younger than 13. The Jackson County Prosecutor believes it wasn't an isolated incident.

"We have reasonable suspicion that there may be multiple victims."

Hines was arrested Sunday after parents reported he molested their child.

"A lot of the contact came potentially through the neighborhood," said Det. Christopher Boulter of Blackman Township Public Safety. "Additional contact could have been made by neighborhood children bringing their friends to his house as well."

Hines lived in a quiet neighborhood just north of Jackson. Neighbors say he kept to himself and when they heard the news on Sunday, they were both shocked and disgusted.

One of them Randy Belden, who claims Hines molested his six year old autistic daughter.

"I don't care if it's a relative of mine or someone i don't know," he said. "Everytime i hear it in the news it makes me sick. I don't think I've ever been this angry my entire life about anything."

Some are relieved their children were never alone with Hines, even though they had been to his house.

"I just moved here a year ago," said father of three John Vanderpool. "I didn't know anything about the guy. My kids had been over there to play. If i had known that i never would have let my kids go over there."

Other neighbors tell us Hines was accused of sexual abuse around eight years ago and that's why they kept they're children away from his home.

"I don't let my kids go over there," said neighbor Douglas Romain. "They're not allowed in his yard."

"You have to make sure you know what he's doing to make sure your kids are safe," echoed parent Shelly Stephenson.

Now that Hines is in jail, those neighbors say it's the first time they've felt safe in years.

Post Your Comments

.submission { display: none; }

First Name:

Location:

Enter Comments:

E-mail: (optional)

Email will not be displayed on site. For station contact purpose only.

Read Comments

*Imported: Jun 22 2007 4:41AM Indexed: Jun 22 2007 7:17AM*



## Fellow inmate says Taylor bragged of molestation

Friday, June 22, 2007

By Barton Deiters

The Grand Rapids Press

GRAND RAPIDS -- A man facing murder charges said he decided to break the code of silence and testify against a fellow jail inmate because he was morally offended by what he says the man did.

Bobby Miller took the stand Thursday to tell a Kent County Circuit Court jury that former music teacher Ronald Taylor bragged about molesting a group of boys he met through his job at Grand Rapids Public Schools.

"Being a rat -- it ain't cool, but I'm doing it because there are little kids involved," said Miller, who is a co-defendant in a 2005 killing of a college student during a robbery gone wrong.

Miller was able to give the names of many of the nine boys, ages 10 and younger, who are accusing Taylor of molesting them. The former teacher is on trial, charged with 15 counts of second-degree criminal sexual conduct.

Miller said Taylor talked openly about his and the boys' physical arousal as a result of the alleged molestation after the two met earlier this year in a Bible study class at the Kent County Jail.

"He said he'd like to do more things," Miller said. "He told me the kids wasn't going to be believed because they were too young."

Miller said he received no promises of reduced charges for his testimony against Taylor, but he will see his murder charge dropped in favor of a five-year unarmed robbery felony because he is testifying against his co-defendant David Blair, who is on trial this week for the killing of 21-year-old Terrence Hopson.

In Taylor's case, the jury could begin deliberating today after hearing from a total of 10 alleged victims -- one of whom is not included in the charges against Taylor -- who said they were molested by Taylor at Buchanan Elementary School, Martin Luther King Learning Academy, Taylor's home, the Zap Zone and while camping near his parent's home.

Assistant Kent County Prosecutor Kevin Bramble wrapped up his case Thursday and defense attorney Fil Iorio began presenting witnesses, including Taylor's co-workers, those who worked with him in volunteer groups and people from Blythefield Baptist Church near Rockford, where he was an approved children's helper.

Buchanan Elementary teacher Karen Blatchford worked with Taylor for four years before he was removed from his job last October. She said she never saw Taylor act inappropriately.

"He was an amazing teacher," she said. "He was always putting in extra time."

Send e-mail to the author: [bdeiters@grpress.com](mailto:bdeiters@grpress.com)

©2007 Grand Rapids Press

© 2007 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.





## Story false, lawyer says

Teacher-student sex allegations denied

### FLINT

#### THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Friday, June 22, 2007

By **Melissa Burden**

**mburden@flintjournal.com • 810.766.6316**

FLINT - The attorney for a Flint School District substitute teacher

who is accused of having sex with a student said the student's allegations are false.

The longtime substitute at Flint Northern Academy, 3284 Mackin Road, is on leave after the allegations surfaced in March or April, said attorney Frank J. Manley.

No charges have been filed, but police are investigating.

Manley said the female teacher, 29, denies having a sexual relationship with or engaging in any inappropriate behavior with the student.

He said his client is a good teacher and he hopes she can soon return to the classroom.

"It's too bad that if you give attention to a student who needs more attention and you try to help them, then this is the result," Manley said.

But Jeff Clothier, who represents the 16-year-old student, told The Flint Journal on Thursday that the teacher began sending text messages to the student and eventually they had sex in her home.

Clothier said the student said that the same day he was arrested on armed robbery charges, he smoked marijuana, drank alcohol and had intercourse with the teacher.

Manley said he believes the release of that information to the media now "was done to divert attention from the serious criminal problems facing this young man."

District spokesman Craig Carter said the substitute, who has worked for the district since September 2005, was placed on paid administrative leave on April 11.

Carter said the issue is a police matter and he declined further comment because it is personnel - related.

Northern Academy houses seventh through 12th grades.

\*\*\*

#### QUICK TAKE

Teacher accused

A Flint Northern Academy substitute teacher has been accused of having sex with a student earlier this school year.

She has been placed on paid administrative leave while police investigate.

No charges have been filed.

\*\*\*





## Neighbors relieved man is off streets

Friday, June 22, 2007

By Danielle Quisenberry

dquisenberry@citpat.com -- 768-4929

Neighbors in a Blackman Township neighborhood are relieved a man accused of having illegal sexual contact with a girl is no longer living on their block.

"There are a lot of little kids on this street," said Dixie Blaisdell, who has a 4-year-old grandson and lives on Amos Street near a house owned by Timothy Hines. "There is no doubt it concerns me."

Hines, 42, was arrested Sunday at his house and arraigned Tuesday on a charge of second-degree criminal sexual conduct, a felony punishable by up to 15 years in prison. A preliminary examination is scheduled for June 28.

Hines' alleged victim is a girl younger than 13 who lives on the same street, said Jackson County Prosecutor Hank Zavislak and Chief Assistant Prosecutor Mark Blumer.

Zavislak organized a press conference Wednesday to talk about the case. He did not release many details because Blackman police are still investigating.

He would not disclose the specifics of the incident that led to the arrest. But he encouraged anyone with children who have come in contact with Hines, who works at Worthington Specialty Process on Meridian Road, to call the township police.

"I think any crime against a child is a terrible thing, and we try to root out offenders and identify victims," Zavislak said at the press conference. "We intend to pursue it aggressively."

He said they arrested Hines after police received complaints about him from parents.

Detective Christopher Boulter of the Blackman Public Safety Department said Hines is an "affective talker" with an influence on children.

Children's toys litter the back yard of his home on Amos Street -- a short street lined with simple, modest homes with front stoops.

In Hines' somewhat unkempt yard, there is a plastic basketball hoop, bicycles, a slide and swing set and a plastic pool sitting on a concrete slab.

A 35-year-old man said he and his wife and their 6-year-old daughter and 5-year-old son had been living in Hines' house. An elderly woman also lived in the home, he said.

The man, who was moving out of the house Thursday, said he was shocked by the arrest.

He said his daughter is involved with the case. Boulter would not confirm whether the girl is the victim.

"I am devastated. We all are," said the man, who is not being named to protect the identity of his daughter.

Neighbors on Hines' street said they have been wary of Hines, who on May 5, 2005, pleaded guilty to fourth-degree criminal sexual conduct in another case.

"We never let our kids go over there and play," said Shelly Stephenson, 28, who lives two doors north of Hines' house. "If he's outside. They are not outside."

©2007 Jackson Citizen Patriot

© 2007 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.





## Michigan AG says nearly 200 sex offenders had MySpace profiles

6/21/2007, 3:50 p.m. ET

**The Associated Press**

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Twenty-eight registered sex offenders in Michigan who are on probation or parole recently had profiles on MySpace.com, a social networking Web site, the state attorney general's office said Thursday.

Four of the sex offenders have terms of supervision prohibiting their use of a computer or the Internet. Altogether, about 200 individuals whose names match the Michigan sex offender registry had MySpace profiles, Attorney General Mike Cox said.

It was not certain that all those people are registered sex offenders, since some only listed last names. And there is nothing keeping users from listing fake names when joining the site.

Cox's office, along with many other states, filed subpoenas for the list after MySpace agreed to share information about registered sex offenders it had identified and removed from the site.

His office filed a motion Thursday against one person on the list, Edward Mitchell Mulak of Ferndale, urging a judge to find him in violation of terms of his probation. Cox's office prosecuted Mulak for possessing child pornography in 2006.

Three other sex offenders on probation or parole were referred to the Michigan Department of Corrections, Cox spokesman Matt Friendewey said. Friendewey estimated that 70 of the 196 MySpace users on the state sex offender registry are considered "child predators" — those convicted of sex offenses with minors.

MySpace is one of the most popular online social networking sites. It has more than 185 million individual profiles, similar to a personal Web page.

Cox said his office's findings should remind parents to monitor their children's Internet activities.

To view the list of MySpace users — and their user names — whose names match those on Michigan's sex offender registry, visit: <http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,1607,7-164-34739-170808--,00.html>

Copyright 2007 Associated Press. All rights reserved.  
This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

© 2007 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.



## AG: Nearly 200 state sex offenders had MySpace profiles

Friday, June 22, 2007

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LANSING -- Two hundred people whose names match the Michigan sex offender registry had profiles on MySpace.com, the popular social-networking Web site, state Attorney General Mike Cox said Thursday.

The 200 state sex offenders were among 7,000 people kicked off MySpace after the Web site decided late last year to try to block sex offenders. MySpace.com has more than 185 million individual profiles, similar to personal Web pages.

Of the 200 state sex offenders recently removed from MySpace, 28 currently are on probation or parole, and four of them had been ordered not to use a computer, Cox spokesman Matt Frendewey said.

Frendewey estimated that 70 of the 196 MySpace users on the state sex offender registry are considered "child predators" -- those convicted of sex offenses with minors.

One of the offenders who had a MySpace profile is Robert Thomas Jaquays of Kentwood, who was convicted in Ottawa County in 2005 of attempted criminal sexual conduct-third degree. The 24-year-old was sentenced to probation but absconded and is wanted by authorities, the Detroit Free Press reported today.

MySpace used ZIP codes and addresses to determine who was registered sex offenders. Cox's office, along with many other states, filed subpoenas for the list after MySpace agreed to share information about registered sex offenders it had identified and removed from the site.

Cox turned three of the names over to the Michigan Department of Corrections for action, and his office took the fourth person, Edward Mitchell Mulak of Ferndale, to Wayne County Circuit Court on Thursday, where he was charged with violating his probation.

Mulak was convicted of possessing child pornography in 2006 after being investigated by Cox's Child and Public Protection Unit. The terms of probation prohibited him from using a computer. He went by the MySpace user name cutedtownboi.

"Today should serve as a reminder to parents to continue to monitor the activities of their children on the Internet," Cox said in a news release.

Including ominous screen names such as "Felonious Thoughts," "Isellcracktomidgets," "boyheartboy" and others not suitable for printing in a family newspaper, the list of 200 caught the attention of state officials.

Cox tried to get a list of Michigan MySpace users, but the site declined. Instead, Cox provided a copy of the state's sex offender registry to MySpace, and it came up with the matches.

"We get a lot of complaints from people about inappropriate communications online," Frendewey said.

Late last year, MySpace, which has 185 million members, decided to begin trying to block sex offenders from the site. Since states have different criteria for their registries, MySpace teamed with Sentinel Tech of Miami to develop a database using the sex offender registries from the 50 states.

The program went live in mid-May, and more than 7,000 matches were found. Those people's pages were deleted and their e-mail addresses blocked from logging onto the site.

The MySpace site can be continuously updated as more names are added to sex offender registries. But

officials from MySpace and Cox's office acknowledged that there are ways to get around the protections with fake names and changed e-mail addresses.

"It's not going to stop folks from making false identities," Frendewey said. "We'll still be using undercover agents online."

The state has no plans to check out potential sex offenders on other social networking sites, such as Facebook and Friendster. Most of the people kicked off the site already had served their sentences and no longer were on probation.

©2007 Muskegon Chronicle

© 2007 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.



## KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

### **Educator to lose teaching certificate over sex crime Ex-KPS administrator also faces year in jail**

Friday, June 22, 2007

**By Julie Mack**

**[jmack@kalamazoogazette.com](mailto:jmack@kalamazoogazette.com) 388-8578**

His guilty plea earlier this month to criminal sexual conduct involving a former student means James Lighthizer will lose his teaching certificate and his job as a Kalamazoo Public Schools administrator.

Lighthizer, assistant principal at Milwood Magnet School, has been on leave from KPS since the charges were filed last August.

Michigan automatically revokes the teaching certificate of a person who pleads guilty to a sex crime involving a minor.

Lighthizer is no longer on the KPS payroll and will be officially dismissed once his teaching certificate is revoked, KPS attorney John Manske said.

Lighthizer, 54, was charged with four counts of first-degree criminal sexual conduct, but in an agreement with prosecutors pleaded guilty to a second-degree charge. The other counts are to be dismissed at his July 23 sentencing.

Under his plea agreement, Lighthizer is to be sentenced to one year in jail, without eligibility for early release, and placed on probation for five years. He is to receive sex-offender counseling, comply with requirements of the state sex-offender-registration law, and allow his probation agent access to all of his computers and electronic devices. He is to have no contact with anyone under age 18 except supervised contact with family and have no contact with the victim or his family.

The victim said during a hearing in October that Lighthizer was like a father to him and that they went to hockey games and played golf together and saw each other daily in 2001. Lighthizer was his workshop teacher at Milwood Magnet School.

The relationship changed the following year, when the victim was 15, according to the boy. He said Lighthizer inappropriately touched him and sexually assaulted him about 20 times. Court records indicate the assaults took place between July and December 2002.

©2007 Kalamazoo

© 2007 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.

[Return to regular web page](#)



This is a printer friendly version of an article from **The Detroit News**  
To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

June 22, 2007

## Dearborn school employee arraigned on sex charges

**Santiago Esparza / The Detroit News**

**HAMTRAMCK** -- A 37-year-old Dearborn man was arraigned this morning on four counts of attempting to set up sex with a Wayne County sheriff's deputy who was posing as a 14-year-old boy.

Steven Lysogorski was charged in Hamtramck district Court with three counts of using the Internet to contact another person to commit a crime and one count of child abusive commercial activity. He pleaded not guilty.

Judge Paul Paruk set bond at \$125,000 and a preliminary exam for July 5.

Lysogorski works in the Dearborn Public Schools district supervising middle school students who receive detention and at-risk students, said Wayne County Sheriff Warren Evans. Lysogorski has worked in the district for about 15 years, Evans said.

Deputies arrested Lysogorski Wednesday in a city outside of Detroit. Evans would not identify the city where Lysogorski was arrested because he said police may want to use the site in a future sting.

Investigators allege that Lysogorski talked online with a deputy posing as the teen several times in the past week and that he offered a cellular phone in exchange for sex in his car.

"It's very disheartening to see someone who has one of the most sacred trusts possible, the supervision of children, allegedly violate that trust by engaging in this type of behavior," Evans said in a press release.

Lysogorski is not married or a parent and has no criminal history.

Dearborn school officials declined comment.

You can reach Santiago Esparza at (734) 462-2673 or [sesparza@detnews.com](mailto:sesparza@detnews.com).

[Return to regular web page](#)

## Letter

# **Don't punish Medicaid for aiding the poor**

The June 12 editorial ("Michigan must control runaway Medicaid costs") portrays the state Medicaid program as the Pac Man of state resources and an overly generous health care program. The Michigan League for Human Services takes exception with both perspectives.

The Medicaid program is doing precisely what it was created to do -- provide health care benefits and services to those who qualify and provide them efficiently. Yes, Medicaid caseloads are climbing. However, it is not the fault of the Medicaid program that employer-based insurance coverage is collapsing as health care and legacy costs take their toll on struggling businesses, or that large profitable companies choose not to provide accessible and affordable coverage for their employees.

Nor is it the fault of the Medicaid program that the health care system overall is in crisis, with costs spiraling upwards as the burden of covering these costs and the health care needs of the uninsured is shifted from health care providers to insurance companies and finally to business in the form of premium increases.

Medicaid is a comprehensive, but not overly generous program as state Sen. Tom George asserts. It is designed to meet the needs of a medically at-risk population and it meets those needs efficiently. While he complains about increases in Medicaid costs, George might be interested to know that the health care costs for senators and their staff increased 50 percent from 2000 to 2005, with relatively stable enrollment, while Medicaid costs increased 62 percent as enrollment grew 34 percent.

Michigan's Medicaid program provides life-saving and life-giving services to those who qualify. It is not an out-of-control program that must be reined in by the Michigan Legislature.

*Ann Marston  
President and CEO  
Michigan League for  
Human Services  
Lansing*

# Family's plight illustrates state's struggles

Kalamazoo Gazette  
Thursday, June 21, 2007

**By Angela K. Sawyers**

I want to address two issues: First, why don't minimum wage laws apply to the day-care profession? Second, what constitutes poverty in the state of Michigan? My reasons for addressing these issues in tandem have to do with a humiliating experience at the Department of Human Services.

This is the first time in more than two decades that either my husband or I have been in the position of needing cash assistance. We've taken our responsibility to our family seriously and do not expect the state to pay for raising our family. My husband was recently fired after 10 years of service to his company. Unemployment has been twice denied and we have gone to court to sue for benefits.

I am employed in the day-care profession, caring for three children under the age of 10. I am paid, by the state through the Department of Human Services, a wage of \$1.60 an hour per child.

We received paperwork stating if we were approved for a cash grant, both my husband and I would have to attend the Work First program, which teaches those in poverty the means by which they can attain self-sufficiency. This program focuses on job training, resume composition, interview skills and transportation needs. It is an admirable program, which my husband was looking forward to utilizing toward gaining employment.

I wondered why I was expected to participate in the program, since I am employed full-time as a day-care aide. I do day care in the home of the children whom I am responsible for, rather than my own home or a licensed day-care facility. I was informed I would still have to attend the Work First program because I don't make minimum wage in my "chosen" profession.

All this was prior to being informed we were ineligible for cash benefits, because my wages, which don't amount to \$900 a month, and my child support, which is less than \$800 a month, puts us above the poverty level.

We have a minimum wage law here in Michigan. Why is the state not obligated to pay day-care employees minimum wage?

Financially, my husband and I are responsible for six children. My husband has been unable to pay child support since he was fired.

Our house payment is \$830 a month. Our utilities and car insurance total \$599 a month and transportation costs are \$240 a month. This totals \$1,669 a month. Our income, including day-care wages, child support and \$500 a month in food stamp benefits, totals \$2,128. However, only \$1,628 of that is actual currency with which we are able to pay our bills.

This doesn't include the amount my husband should be paying for child support, nor does it account for toiletries, cleaning supplies and other expenses unexpected and yearly -- such as flat tires, new brakes, birthday presents and holidays -- all of which leave recreational possibilities absolutely out of the equation. When our Consumers Energy bill went to disconnect status, I attempted to gain emergency assistance from the Department of Human Services and was informed they had no funds. I was referred to The Salvation Army. They, also, were without funds and referred me to four other agencies.

The Community Action Agency agreed to pay \$500, deferring the remaining amount to St. Vincent DePaul. But then my caseworker at the Community Action Agency called to tell me it had overestimated its ability to pay my bill, as well as seven other families who had applied and been approved.

When I asked why our state was in such a predicament, I was told that Michigan, as opposed to other states, is a predominantly well-to-do place, and therefore doesn't qualify for the same levels of federal funding as other states.

It is my firm belief, that those in the upper classes have compassion, faith in God and a deep sense of community. If made aware of the circumstances of the children living in poverty, it is my fervent hope that these people have more influence based on their greater income and contacts with lawmakers. This is the message they need to understand: WE ARE IN PERIL AS A COMMUNITY.

A community includes every member, from doctors and lawyers to children in poverty. We all matter equally! If you can't change the laws, then reach into your pocket and donate to those organizations in our community that are doing everything they can to ensure that families in poverty maintain electricity, housing, nutrition and medical care. Donate to the agencies that offer emergency assistance. We need you more now than ever.

Angela K. Sawyers resides in Kalamazoo.



### **3P Campaign supports fight against domestic violence**

6/22/2007 Royal Oak Mirror

---

ROYAL OAK - The Royal Oak Police Department and HAVEN have teamed up to strengthen their ability to prevent, protect against and prosecute cases of domestic and sexual violence.

The two groups received a \$230,000 federal grant from the 3P Campaign to fund domestic violence education, improved police equipment and community awareness.

"It is a crime that does happen in the city of Royal Oak," said Beth Morrison, CEO of HAVEN, an Oakland County-based support center for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse.

Although the 3P (prevent, protect, prosecute) Campaign is a national effort, Morrison said local groups are free to make their own unique program. The Royal Oak campaign includes four main points.

HAVEN can now provide more legal advocacy services for victims, she said. Grant money has also funded improved cameras and recording equipment in police patrol cars.

Police, prosecutors and court officials have received training about domestic and sexual violence and child abuse, such as how to recognize abuse, myths, how to intervene and what follow-up to provide. Lastly, the campaign will increase community awareness of domestic violence and similar crimes.

The initial training has concluded, Morrison said, but will be ongoing with refresher courses.

"Since the training, people have had an opportunity to meet the advocates, and we have seen an increase in referrals from the Royal Oak Police Department," she said. Officers are now giving victims more information on HAVEN as well as giving HAVEN information on domestic violence cases.

About \$150,000 of the two-year grant goes toward new recording equipment in Royal Oak patrol cars.

Officers have been working with cameras that record to 8mm cassette tapes and wear transmitters that only record if they are within 100 feet of their car, said Lt. Gordon Young.

The new cameras are digital, providing higher quality images, and can take still pictures, Young said. New transmitters allow officers to be up to 1,000 feet away from their car and still record conversations. If officers have recordings of conversations with victims, those recordings can be entered as evidence if a victim does not want to testify, Young said.

"It's far superior to the equipment we have," he said.

For more information on HAVEN visit [www.haven-oakland.org](http://www.haven-oakland.org).

## **Pay database angers state workers**

LSJ posting of public information invades privacy, employees say

Chris Andrews  
Lansing State Journal

Published June 22, 2007

The Lansing State Journal's posting of a database of state government workers' salaries Thursday set off a firestorm of complaints by employees.

Some state workers felt it was an offensive invasion of privacy. Others expressed fear that providing names, pay and the communities in which they worked could lead to identity theft or even stalking.

Web traffic to the database on lsj.com was so heavy that it shut down the State Journal server.

Nancy Hill, a state secretary, said she was a little hurt and confused by the newspaper's posting of the information.

"To post our names with salaries and date of hiring, and where we work, it just seems very personal to me," said Hill, one of dozens of workers who called to complain. "It's kind of my personal business."

The newspaper posted the searchable database of more than 53,000 employees as part of its Data Connection, an initiative to provide readers access to public information that they can not otherwise easily get. The State Journal intends to post similar data on other public employees in mid-Michigan.

The information is public and was obtained from the Michigan Department of Civil Service in response to a Freedom of Information request.

"What we've provided on lsj.com informs the public - the taxpayers - who ultimately pay expenses of government, including the salaries of public employees," said Mickey Hirten, executive editor of the Lansing State Journal.

He acknowledged that this is upsetting to workers, especially since this sort of public service journalism hasn't been done in mid-Michigan.

"Much of what we do balances competing rights and interests," he said. "In this case we believe that making available to the public - to taxpayers - information that is

publicly available, and traditionally has been available to only a small group of special interests, is valuable, especially as the state wrestles with its budget issues."

Hirten said that the competing value, in this case, privacy, is different for public employees than for workers at private businesses.

Newspaper companies, once limited by print, increasingly are distributing information on the Web. The Internet makes it easier and more user friendly to distribute large amounts of information.

The Asbury Park Press in New Jersey has posted salaries of state and local employees as well as college workers. The Boston Herald has a database of state and college employees' pay.

The publication of individuals' salaries inevitably makes many public workers wince but nonetheless provides a legitimate service, said Paul McMasters, former ombudsman for the Freedom Forum's First Amendment Center and a national expert on the First Amendment.

"Your boss has a right to know your salary, and by extension, the public is your boss," McMasters said.

But Lauren Weinstein, founder of People for Internet Responsibility, said that while the information is public record, there are some protections to people when it takes more effort to get.

Making the information easily available "changes the way that it can be misused," he said.

Contact Chris Andrews at 377-1054 or [candrews@lsj.com](mailto:candrews@lsj.com).



news

research

athletics

Search

June 22, 2007

## news

[MSU board approves naming of Lyman Briggs College](#)

[MSU faculty earn University Distinguished Professor title](#)

[College of Music presents 11th Annual Summer Carillon Series](#)

[MSU quartet wins national award](#)

[Dubai delegation visits MSU](#)

## research

[MSU's long-term care background check system becomes model for federal legislation](#)

[Research links childhood social skills and learning abilities](#)

[Research shows a predator affects prey species more through scaring than eating](#)

[Researchers use NIH grant to study 'bugs in the gut'](#)

## athletics

[Michigan State announces major athletic award winners](#)

[Athletics Ticket Office now accepting new football season-ticket orders](#)

[MSU sets criteria for next athletic director](#)

[Spartan football TV update: kickoff times set for UAB, Pitt](#)

## MSU's long-term care background check system becomes model for federal legislation

by Lisa Mulcrone

**June 21, 2007** - Since the long-term care background check system developed by MSU went into effect for the state of Michigan on April 1, 2006, nearly 4,000 of approximately 163,000 applicants were deemed unemployable because of records of abuse or criminal histories discovered during the process. Because of its success, the system is now being used as a model for the rest of the country in legislation introduced in the U.S. Senate.

In 2005, MSU researchers partnered with several state of Michigan agencies to develop and implement Michigan's Workforce Background Check Program as one of seven pilot programs in the country funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The program is a Web-based informatics system developed in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences that integrates the databases of a number of registries and provides a mechanism for conducting criminal history checks on prospective employees, current employees, independent contractors and those granted clinical privileges in facilities.

"This system gives peace of mind to Michiganders with family members in long-term care, potentially saving lives and reducing injuries," said Lori Post, assistant dean of research in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences. "In addition, our incremental background check system has created a significant cost savings to taxpayers. And for every crime prevented, we save the family, the facility and the taxpayers' money by reducing hiring and training charges, criminal justice investigations and social service support needed to recover from crimes."

According to Orlene Christie, director of the Legislative and Statutory Compliance Office in the Michigan Department of Community Health who provided testimony to the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging last month, the system identified thousands of applicants as unemployable during just one year of using the process. Applicants were excluded from hiring pools due to information found on lists such as the U.S. Health and Human Services exclusion list, the Office of the Inspector General exclusion list, the nurse aid registry, the sex offender registry, the offender tracking information system and the FBI list.

"The applicants that have been excluded from employment are not the types of people Michigan could ever allow to work with our most vulnerable citizens," said Christie. "We have prevented

[email this article to a friend](#)

[email the editor](#)

[print this article](#)



**subscribe**

[Subscribe now for free weekly \(campus\) and quarterly \(international\) email updates.](#)

**images**

**Video**  
[Advancing Knowledge. Transforming Lives.](#)

[MSU, UM - Working Together](#)

**Photos**  
[MSU Today gallery](#)

[AlumEye Pic o' the Day](#)

**audio**

[Shadows](#)

[MSU Today on WJR](#)

[Spartan Podcast](#)

[WDBM](#)  
[WKAR](#)  
[WMSU](#)



**tools**

[Campus map](#)  
[Events Calendar](#)

[Find a person at MSU](#)  
[Search msu.edu sites](#)

**search**

Search

MSUToday:

hardened criminals that otherwise would have access to our vulnerable population from employment.”

Nursing home facilities were involved in the design of the system, an important element in the success and use of the system, said Post.

“The MSU team asked what I’d like to see in such a system and I was pleased that they asked employers for feedback, and that has continued all along,” said Mary Bouchard, human resources coordinator at Burcham Hills retirement community. “When I have suggestions or questions, the MSU response is immediate. The system has streamlined our operations too. Before, we had to go to many separate sites to check backgrounds—now the information is all wrapped into one system.”

This month, the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act of 2007, based in part on Michigan’s program, was introduced in the U.S. Senate. Of the pilot programs, Michigan boasts the only statewide system and also the most comprehensive in terms of systems and cost benefit analysis.

“Protecting the health and safety of our most vulnerable citizens should be a top priority,” said Sen. Debbie Stabenow of Michigan, one of the original co-sponsors of the bill. “I am proud that much of this legislation is modeled after the successful Michigan pilot program and working together we can expand on its progress.”

The system that MSU and the partner agencies developed gives long-term care providers online access to the system with a secure login and password, allowing them to check multiple registries. If no matches are found, the applicant is sent along with their information to an independent vendor for a digital scan of their fingerprints, which are sent to the Michigan State Police and then to the FBI. If disqualifying information is found, notice is sent to either the Michigan Department of Community Health or the Michigan Department of Human Services for staff analysts to examine the applicant’s criminal history. An appeals process also was enacted to provide a fair system to deal with inaccurate reports.

In addition, Michigan employs a “rap back” system by the Michigan State Police that notifies the state agencies of real-time changes in a history including arrests, charges and convictions. The agencies, in turn, notify the employers.

The federal legislation would replicate a similar system nationwide.

“If enacted, this legislation could help to prevent many of the tragic tales of physical and financial elder abuse,” said Sen. Herb Kohl of Wisconsin, co-sponsor of the bill and chairperson of the Senate Special Committee on Aging. “This bill would close gaping loopholes in our current system of background checks by

expanding nationwide a pilot program that has already proven successful.”

Post is thrilled to see the system she helped develop get recognized for its success and used as a national model.

“It is one of the highest honors for a researcher to impact national policy and for me to translate abstract violence research into a plan of action that positively impacts people,” she said. “We could not have created our system if the state partners did not pass the necessary legislation mandating the system’s use. And we had the capacity to develop and test a sophisticated Web-based informatics system for the state to use and finally, we have the privilege of providing the U.S. Senate with research results for informed policy decisions.”

[email this article to a friend](#)

[email the editor](#)

[print this article](#)

**About MSU Today • Link to Us • MSU Today Magazine • Privacy Statement**

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**

Copyright © 2000-2001 Michigan State University Board of Trustees  
East Lansing, MI 48824 USA  
MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer.



## KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

### Meals on Wheels spread thin Increased demand leads to cut in meals delivered to one per day

Friday, June 22, 2007

By Jeff Barr

[jbarr@kalamazoogazette.com](mailto:jbarr@kalamazoogazette.com) 388-8581

Nearly all the needy senior citizens in Kalamazoo County who rely on the Meals on Wheels program are now receiving just one meal per day.

A 10 percent increase this year in the number of senior citizens applying for Meals on Wheels has resulted in the program eliminating a dinner-time snack meal from the daily delivery to virtually all clients.

David Carroll, business manager of Food and Transportation Services for Senior Services Inc., which administers the program, said the choice was either to cut the meals per client or create a waiting list for needy seniors. The cut from two meals per day to one went into effect June 11.

"Many Meals on Wheels programs throughout the country have a waiting list," Carroll said. "We are fortunate in Kalamazoo to be able to deliver meals to every senior that qualifies for the Meals on Wheels program."

"If we would have kept delivering two meals per day, that wouldn't have been the case."

Needy seniors still receive a hot meal at lunchtime. It includes meat, potatoes and vegetables. The dinner-time snack meal has been eliminated for all but "a very limited number of the most needy clients," Carroll said.

"Most of the clients have been understanding," he said. "It was a tough decision, but one we had to make."

Kalamazoo's Meals on Wheels, which delivers about 500 meals per day to needy seniors in Kalamazoo County, is contracted to serve 150,000 meals per fiscal year. Grants, money from service organizations and private donations pay for the contract.

Meals on Wheels has delivered 112,000 meals since Oct. 2006, when the fiscal year began.

"An increase in demand, without an increase in contracted funds, forced the cutting of the dinner-time snack meal," Carroll said. "Even with the cutback, it looks like we are going to go over 150,000 meals."

"If that happens, we then rely on the strong support we've always received from private donors in Kalamazoo."

©2007 Kalamazoo

© 2007 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.

www.michigan.gov  
(To Print: use your browser's print function)

Release Date: June 21, 2007  
Last Update: June 21, 2007

## Governor Granholm Honors Michigan Volunteers

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm presented Governor's Service Awards to individuals and organizations for their exemplary volunteer service at the 2007 Governor's Service Awards event, *The Miracle of Volunteering*, held Wednesday, June 20, 2007, at the Fox Theatre in Detroit.



"Michigan's great volunteers help make miracles happen across the state every day," Granholm said. "Our volunteers are out there day after day, year after year, working to make Michigan a great place to live. The Governor's Service Awards are just one way we can say thank you for their efforts."

The Miracles, Motown legends and singing sensations, joined the Governor in honoring the delighted award winners and all of the award finalists. They entertained the crowd with their chart-topping crowd pleasers, which include Shop Around, The Tracks of My Tears, Love Machine, and I Second That Emotion. Also performing for the crowd of more than 2,000, were La Chispa and Company, the O'Hare School of Irish Dance, and the Winston Institute of Arts.

"The best miracle is the miracle of giving," said Bobby Rogers, an original member of The Miracles. "It's what makes volunteers special people. They have opened their hearts and given of their time and talents unselfishly."

The Governor's Service Awards were made possible only through the generous contributions of corporate sponsors. The Platinum Sponsor is State Farm Insurance and the Gold Sponsor is the Ford Motor Company Fund. The Premier Sponsors are: Comcast, DaimlerChrysler Corporation Fund, DTE Energy Foundation, EDS, Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation, Lear Corporation, MASCO Corporation Foundation, Meijer, and W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The Governor's Champions are: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Central Michigan University, CMS Energy/ Consumers Energy, Comer Holdings, ConnectMichigan Alliance, Council of Michigan Foundations, Delta Dental, General Motors Corporation, Greektown Casino, and Pfizer. The Governor's Heroes are: Health Alliance Plan, Hudson-Webber Foundation, Mawby Family Fund/Battle Creek Community Foundation, Pace & Partners, Inc., and UAW-GM Center for Human Resources.

In addition, Olivet College, a private, liberal arts institution in south central Michigan, presented all five finalists for the Youth Volunteer Award of Excellence with a Community Responsibility Scholarship valued at \$6,000 per year renewable for four years. This unique scholarship program is designed to reward responsibility, community service, civic engagement, and volunteerism.

At a private reception prior to the awards presentation, special tributes from the Governor were presented to all 41 award finalists.

The Governor's Service Awards winners were selected from the finalists in each award category. Friends, relatives, and colleagues submitted nearly 180 nominations to pay tribute to individuals and organizations they feel exemplify the spirit of volunteer service. An objective peer review panel and the Michigan Community Service Commission, the organization that manages the event, board of commissioners selected the finalists and winners.

The Governor's Service Awards are given annually to individuals, businesses, and organizations to acknowledge their commitment to solving community issues through volunteerism. Nine awards were presented in the following categories:

The **Governor George Romney Lifetime Achievement Award for Volunteerism**, which is the most prestigious of the Governor's Service Awards, was presented to **Lenore Croudy of Flint**. The award honors an individual who has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to community involvement and volunteer service. Lenore moved to the community in 1966 and immediately began 39 years of service as an educator and community volunteer. Her deep community involvement stems from a determination to make life better for all and to ensure minority youth are exposed to the activities that enable them to live an engaged, active life. Early in her career, she took her students on field trips during her free time, using her own money. She organized block clubs and neighborhood associations, developed diversity workshops for teachers, and got involved with political campaigns for area school board candidates. She created the Youth Leadership Institute, which teaches African-American students community leadership. She has served on multiple boards including the Mott Community College, YWCA, Center for the Visually Impaired, Michigan Community College Association, Salvation Army, and Voluntary Action Center. She has been involved in many more community endeavors all designed to enhance life in the Flint area.

The **Exemplary Volunteer Service Award** was presented to **Doug Heslip of Marquette**. This award honors an individual who strives to improve the lives of others-someone who goes the extra mile for their community. Doug has been a sports volunteer for 15 years and has been coaching the Marquette County Youth Football League for the past six years. His approach to coaching is more about building solid citizens than about winning games. He



believes it is his responsibility to help each young man develop into a community leader and athlete. Each year, he helps 25 young men build their character, ethics, teamwork, integrity, and self-esteem-indeed their whole life. Doug emphasizes citizenship, respect for others, being humble in the face of victory, and winning or losing with class and compassion. He expects his players to display these qualities on and off the field. Doug sets the same high standards for his assistant coaches, and the parents of Doug's players sense the higher standard and respond accordingly. In addition to the lives of boys he coaches, he is a true community change agent. He is impacting the whole area through his high standards of coaching. Last year his team went undefeated in positive youth development and in the win/loss column.

The **Exemplary Community Service Program Award** was presented to **Tuesday Toolmen of Kalamazoo**. This award honors an organization that effectively uses volunteers to meet its mission. Tuesday Toolmen is an energetic group of 16 dedicated volunteers who use their skills to address home safety issues and provide barrier free renovations for senior citizens and individuals with disabilities. These RSVP volunteers do electrical, plumbing, and roofing work, replace doors and windows, and install deadbolts, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, grab bars, and wheelchair ramps. Their skills allow many low-income seniors to remain safely in their own homes and prevent premature placement in assisted living facilities and nursing homes. Last year these civic-minded gentlemen volunteered 1,700 hours by repairing 128 homes, making 11 barrier free modifications, and completing 10 home safety evaluations. This model program is now being replicated in other communities. Tuesday Toolmen have been serving their community for 11 years.

The **Innovative Mentoring Program Award** was presented to the **Winning Futures - Mentoring Solutions of Warren**. This award recognizes a mentoring program that has found a unique and effective approach to mentoring children. Winning Futures inspires and prepares young people to succeed. Winning Futures serves students in Highland Park, Oak Park, Warren, and Pontiac and is dedicated to empowering youth to take control of their lives and overcome their obstacles. The program is customized for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders so all activities are age appropriate. Students, along with their mentors, participate in structured sessions during the school day or after school. Each week, a topic from the workbook such as leadership, work values, or career assessment is presented to the mentors and mentees. Then each mentoring team has group discussions, written exercises, self-assessments, or hand-on projects facilitated by their mentors. The mentors work with a group of three students throughout the school year and mentoring relationships typically last one to five years. Student scholarships are also a key component of the program and scholarships totaling \$1.4 million have been presented to students since the program's inception.

The **Outstanding Corporate Citizenship Award** was presented to **Comcast** of Southfield. This award honors businesses that demonstrate excellent corporate citizenship by giving back to their community through corporate volunteer programs, monetary contributions, in-kind gifts, and employee-driven volunteer service. Comcast is committed to leveraging their advanced technology and resources to making a difference in the communities they serve. In 2006, Michigan Comcast employees rendered more than 27,000 volunteer hours in support of organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metropolitan Detroit, United Way Community Services, City Year, and many more. Last year, Comcast's Michigan Region provided approximately \$10 million in in-kind promotional support for local nonprofit organizations. Additionally, they currently invest up to \$4 million annually by offering services that support schools and life long learning via free cable and high speed Internet to 2,300 schools K-12 and libraries. Their creative involvement has also led to the development of a homework hotline, a weekly call-in program to help Detroit students with math problems. Comcast has awarded more than \$7.5 million in college aid to more than 7,500 high school students through their Leaders and Achievers program, which began in 2001. The Comcast Foundation, established in 1999, has donated more than \$30 million nationwide since its inception, including \$325,000 to Michigan nonprofits in 2006 alone.

The **Outstanding Mentor Award** was presented to **Carlos Quinney, Jr. of Lansing**. This award honors an individual who has made a significant difference in a child's life through mentoring. CJ is a senior at Michigan State University and has been mentoring since he was in 9<sup>th</sup> grade at Sexton High School. He began in the PALS program where he helped other students with classes, homework, and social issues. CJ has also been a Big Brother to a young man from Lansing for six years. He has helped Marton grow from an eight-year-old with mediocre academic performance into a well-mannered eighth grader with a 3.5 GPA. Marton was recently awarded a Hope Scholarship, which will help support his post-secondary education. When not working on their studies, the two can be found at the movies, Sexton and MSU football games, and going out to dinner. Mostly, though, they just hang out as friends doing everyday things. In addition to being a mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters Michigan Capital Region, CJ recognizes the great need for male mentors and is committed to raising awareness and recruiting men to fill this void. He is involved with Break the Cycle, a national organization that works with at-risk youth to help them break the cycle of poverty, gang involvement, drug addiction, hopelessness, and despair. Upon his graduation from MSU, CJ plans to continue his work with BTC to bring the program to more states and schools throughout the U.S.

The **Senior Volunteer Award of Excellence** was presented to **Margaret Yake of Lexington**. This award honors a senior citizen who has taken action to make her or his community a better place to live. Peg began taking children into her home in the 1940's, and thus began a long career of helping others. The first four children were from the Children's Aid Society, and within a year she took in four more children. During her life, she has opened her home to twenty-six foster children. Her house was also a home for her four grandchildren, two of whom she and her husband

adopted. Peg's home has been a second home to countless teens over the years who felt they were safe and loved there. Peg was a Girl Scout leader for many years and knows that she could still "set up camp" if needed, and laughs at the thought of doing so now at age 90. Peg helped start Project Blessing, which collects food and clothing for those in need, and has been a school crossing guard for many years.

The **Youth Volunteer Award of Excellence** was presented to **Bridget Gaitor of Taylor**. This award honors a young person who has taken action to make his or her community a better place to live. Bridget is a senior at Harry S. Truman High School. She began volunteering in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade through school-sponsored service activities. She has spent countless hours volunteering at the Oakwood Heritage Hospital where her service touches young and old alike, including her classmates and peers. She has volunteered with the Penrickton Center for blind children, served as a Teens Against Tobacco Use facilitator, and been involved with Natural Helpers facilitating peer counseling. Bridget is president of the African American Teen Leadership Council, junior volunteer staff at the Boys and Girls Club, a member of the Taylor Youth Council, and the driving force behind the Prom Pledge campaign to promote safe and healthy prom experiences. She is a member of the Taylor Substance Abuse Task Force and has helped plan the Drug-Free Taylor Day and Turn Off the Violence projects.

Three other special awards were also presented. Hugo E. Braun, Jr. received the Russell G. Mawby Award for Philanthropy for his outstanding service in Saginaw County and Molly Dobson of Ann Arbor won the Community Foundation Award for Philanthropy. The Carter Partnership Award was presented to Madonna University and All Saints Neighborhood Center - Neighborhood Center, Inc. - Partnership for Community Cohesion. This award inspires and rewards partnerships between colleges or universities and community groups that work together in exceptional ways to improve people's lives while helping students learn the value of service.

[Click here to view the press release announcing all of the finalists.](#)

###

### ***Background***

The Michigan Community Service Commission builds a culture of service by providing vision and resources to strengthen communities through volunteerism. In 2007, it is granting more than \$6.2 million in federal funds to local communities for volunteer programs and activities. The MCSC's signature programs are AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve, Mentor Michigan, and the Governor's Service Awards. It is a part of the Michigan Department of Human Services, which assists children, families, and vulnerable adults to be safe, stable, and self-supporting.

Copyright © 2007 State of Michigan

Organization: Michigan Department of Human Services

Date: 6/22/2007

(powered by NewspaperClips.com)

## Five things about midnight golf

06/22/2007 © Detroit Free Press

June 22, 2007 BY EMILIANA SANDOVAL FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER The young people in the program do play golf, but not exactly at midnight. THE PROGRAM Midnight Golf is a life skills program open to Detroit Public Schools students ages 17-22. Executive director Rene Fluker founded it in 2001. Advertisement "The idea came about with my son, Jason, who was on the golf league at U of D Jesuit High and was the only African American on the team at the time. It was when Tiger Woods was coming up. When we went out on our last tour, he said, 'Mom, when you come back, start a program so that inner-city kids can learn to play golf.' "We teach golf, but it's about changing their lives. These are some of the first students in their families to go to college. We give them life skills, show them there's more to life than having babies and doing drugs and going to jail." Last fall, 200 students applied for 100 spots, and 71 completed the program in May. COMMITMENT Midnight Golf meets Monday and Wednesday nights for 30 weeks, starting in September. From 5:30-6:30 there's life skills training, such as financial literacy, ACT/SAT preparation or how to write thank-you notes. Then there's a sit-down dinner followed by an hour and a half of golf lessons taught by PGA pros. The program meets at Beech Woods Golf Course in Southfield until November, then moves to Marygrove College. It ends at 8:30 p.m. and buses take the students home. The program is run by volunteers and funded by sponsors. (Fluker's full-time job is community liaison for the Wayne County Department of Human Services). COLLEGE TRIP Every year, the Midnight Golfers take a spring trip South to check out colleges. This year they visited 11 schools, including Auburn, Morehouse and Vanderbilt. "They play golf, they visit the schools, they go to dinner at nice places -- no fast food," Fluker said. "We stay at Embassy Suites hotels. We went to the Georgia Aquarium in Atlanta and the Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville. The purpose is to expose them to things they wouldn't otherwise be exposed to." Almost 80% of Midnight Golf graduates go to college. ON THE COURSE The Seventh Annual Midnight Golf Outing and fund-raiser will be Tuesday at the Western Golf and Country Club in Redford Township. Registration is at 8 a.m., tee time at 9. There'll also be lunch and a silent auction. Golf spots are almost full, but sponsorship and volunteers are needed. Call 313-963-1433 for information. APPLY To learn more about Midnight Golf or to apply for the program, go to [www.midnightgolf.org](http://www.midnightgolf.org).

*Imported: Jun 22 2007 6:46AM Indexed: Jun 22 2007 7:17AM*